

PRE-SUBMISSION COMMUNITY MEETING INFORMATION

Updated September, 2014

INTENT

The Subdivision and Land Development Regulations require a pre-submission community meeting to be held prior to the **initial** plan submission to the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ). Pre-submission community meetings are required for all new residential developments and for non-residential developments if the site is located within 200 feet of a residential zoning district. Pre-submission community meetings are also required for all new Downtown Columbia and Columbia Village Center redevelopment plans, some existing non-residential projects where the proposed building floor area exceeds 25% of the existing building, zoning conditional use petitions and for any zoning map amendment to be heard by the Zoning Board. A pre-submission community meeting is for the developer/petitioner to provide information to the community regarding the proposed development or rezoning proposal and to allow community residents the opportunity to ask questions and make comments about the development or rezoning proposal. The intent is to keep residents informed of proposals that may affect their neighborhood by bringing the developer/petitioner together with the communities early on in the planning process. While the developer/petitioner is encouraged to work with the community to achieve a mutually acceptable solution to any concerns, unless a change is required by the Subdivision and Land Development or the Zoning Regulations, the developer/petitioner is not required by law to change the proposed development or rezoning proposal in response to comments made at the pre-submission community meeting.

The information below highlights the pre-submission meeting requirements and available County web resources. Please refer to Section 16.128 of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations for ALL the pre-submission community meeting requirements.

Meeting Locations, Dates and Time:

- The meeting shall be held in a public or institutional building located within approximately five miles of the subject property.
- The meeting shall be scheduled to start between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. on weekday evenings, or to be held between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on a Saturday.
- The meeting date shall exclude all official County Holidays and Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Eid Ul Fitr, Eid Ul Adha and the Chinese New Year.

Meeting Notification:

- The developer/petitioner shall provide **three weeks advance notice** regarding the date, time and location of the pre-submission community meeting and the property shall be **posted at least three weeks** immediately prior to the meeting.
- At least three weeks prior to the meeting the developer/petitioner shall electronically apply for the Pre-Submission Community Meeting with the Department of Planning and Zoning via [Projectdox](#). Once applied, DPZ shall place the meeting notice on the Department's website.
- At least three weeks prior to the meeting the developer/petitioner shall notify, **by first-class mail** with notice to the following:
 - All adjoining property owner's identified in the records of the State Department of Assessments and Taxation; and
 - Any community association that represents the geographic area of the subject property or any adjoining properties; and
 - School "Principals" and "PTA Presidents" through a mailing to each school with an attendance area that includes the proposed development. School addresses and attendance area information is available on the [HCPSS webpage](#) and attendance area maps are also available on the [HCPSS webpage](#)
- At least three weeks prior to the meeting the developer/petitioner shall notify **electronically** the following:
 - Any community association, person, or organization registered within the County to be notified about projects in certain geographic areas (see the Web Resources section below).
 - The Howard County Council. The Council is automatically notified via ProjectDox, and
 - The Department of Planning and Zoning. DPZ is automatically notified via ProjectDox.

- The notification must include the following:
 - Time, date and place of the pre-submission community meeting
 - Address and map of the property location
 - Type of initial plan submittal
 - Type and amount of development including the number of residential units/lots proposed
 - DPZ website address and "Plans In Process" webpage
 - Information about how to sign up to receive meeting minutes and follow-up correspondence if the recipient is unable to attend the pre-submission community meeting

Posting: At least **three weeks prior** to the meeting the developer/petitioner shall post the subject property accordingly:

- The posters shall be erected in a prominent location that is visible to the public and that is as close as possible and perpendicular to the road which serves or will serve as the mailing address for the property. Posters shall include the time, date, and place of the community meeting, address of the property, type of initial plan submittal, type and amount of development including the number of residential units/lots and "Plans in Process" webpage address
- If the property adjoins parkland, a community center, a school, a library, or any other County owned buildings that are frequently visited by citizens to obtain services, DPZ may require an additional poster be erected in a prominent location that is visible to the public in the closest usable portion of the park, community center or facility
- The posters shall remain in place and be maintained by the developer/petitioner for at least three weeks following the pre-submission community meeting

Development Plan Presentation during the Meetings:

- At the pre-submission community meeting the developer/petitioner shall distribute a summary of the County's Subdivision and Development Review Process, or the Conditional Use Process, or the Zoning Map Amendment Process (whichever is applicable), as prepared by the Department of Planning and Zoning (see the Web Resources section below)
- For presentation purposes, the developer/petitioner must use full scale plan drawings and send a representative who is knowledgeable of the project
- The developer/petitioner shall maintain a record of the names, addresses, and if available, electronic mail addresses for all attendees to the pre-submission community meetings, and anyone unable to attend the meeting who contacts the developer/petitioner requesting to be added to the list
- The developer/petitioner shall compile comprehensive minutes of the meeting which include a written response to all questions not verbally answered at the meeting

For Subdivision Plans, Site Development Plans or Site Plan Zoning Petitions:

- The plans must identify the following information: the type and number of lots or housing units or non-residential structures, the property zoning, proposed private or public roads and use-in-common driveways, parking lots, open space lots or preservation parcels including agricultural preservation easements, storm water management facilities, protected environmental features (wetlands, steep slopes, streams and 100 year flood plain) and buffers, approximate limit of disturbance, proposed forest conservation areas and landscape buffers areas, any existing historic or other structures to be retained or removed, and proposed sidewalk or pathway connections to adjoining properties, etc.
- The plans must also identify any existing significant vicinal features such as scenic roads, off-site environmental features, historic sites, cemeteries, agricultural preservation easements, nearby public roads and existing homes or other structures within 100 feet
- The presentation must describe how the development plan complies with County or State regulations and whether any deviations or waivers from the requirements must be requested from the County or State before the plan can be approved
- The presentation must explain how the proposed development plan minimizes potential impacts on the adjoining residential community through its design, orientation of lots, houses, or non-residential structures and parking lots, use of landscaping, retention of existing vegetation or forests, berms, fences or walls, etc. to effectively screen or buffer the proposed development
- The presentation must describe how the proposed project protects the environment, preserves open space, incorporates important site features into the subdivision design such as specimen trees, unique topography, ponds, historic structures, and forested areas, etc.

For Conditional Uses:

- The plans must identify all existing and proposed: structures, access points onto public roads; driveways; fencing/walls; parking areas; loading areas; refuse disposal areas; landscaping. All relevant dimensions must be indicated for all improvements and the distance of all structures and uses relative to adjacent property lines must be provided
- The presentation must address how the nature and intensity of the proposed Conditional Use will be compatible with the zoning and land use of the surrounding properties and how existing or proposed site features such as topography, landscaping or fencing/ screening will minimize adverse impacts to those properties

For Piecemeal Zoning Petitions:

- The plans must identify the existing and proposed zoning designation of the subject site and the zoning designation of all adjacent properties. Any existing development both on the site and on these adjacent properties should be depicted and labeled in terms of use
- The presentation must address how the proposed zoning designation will be compatible with the zoning and land use of the surrounding properties

Post Meeting Requirements:

- The developer/petitioner shall send a copy of the minutes and written responses to all questions not verbally answered at the meeting to the meeting attendees and to all interested parties unable to attend the meeting, either electronically or by first-class mail within 30 days of the meeting. Another pre-submission community meeting may be required, at the discretion of the Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning if the developer/petitioner fails to comply with the above requirements, or if plans are submitted that are significantly different from what was presented at the pre-submission community meeting, unless the changes are in response to community input
- Certification by the developer/petitioner that the meeting notices and minutes, which include the written response to questions not answered verbally at the meeting, were sent, together with the recipients' contact information, and shall be transmitted to the Dept of Planning and Zoning when initial plans are filed and shall become part of the official file record
- If the developer/petitioner does not submit plans to DPZ within one year of the pre-submission community meeting, another pre- submission community meeting and notification shall be required in accordance with Section 16.128 of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations
- Within 7 days after filing the initial plan with DPZ, the developer/petitioner shall send notice of the submittal to all meeting attendees and to all other parties who requested such notification to be sent to each address and electronic mail address. This notification shall include instructions on how to be notified when future submissions are made or when DPZ takes action on the proposal

Web Resources:

Please select the Pre-Submission Community Meeting information topic on [DPZ's website](#) to access the following information:

- [The Pre-Submission Community Meeting Informational Video](#)
- The Development Review Process document and flowchart
- The Conditional Use Process
- The Zoning Map Amendment Process
- The Pre-submission community meeting application for development
- The Pre-submission community meeting for zoning and/or conditional use
- A web application to [search pre-submission community meetings](#) that have been applied for through the County's ProjectDox application system
- A web application entitled, "[Developer Notification to Community,](#)" that generates a list of all community members and associations that have registered with the County to be notified of pre-submission community meetings within their selected region. The application must electronically notify all members generated by this application
- A web application entitled, "[Register Your Community,](#)" that allows the public to register their community with the County in order to receive notification of pre-submission community meetings for properties within their selected region
- A web application to [Search Plans in Process](#)

TEMPLATE FOR PRE-SUBMISSION COMMUNITY MEETING NOTIFICATION:

In an effort to simplify the process for pre-submission community meeting notification, the Department of Planning and Zoning has developed a template that should be used to notify adjoining property owners and registered communities of new subdivision and site development plans in Howard County. The templates were developed to ensure the community is receiving the specific details regarding the proposed development and to provide a consistent template for community notification. The templates should be placed on the appropriate letterhead or contained within an email with the consultant/developer information. The bold information may be altered to describe the specific project, but should include the date, time and location of the meeting; the subdivision name, address and map showing the location of the site; the zoning designation; type of development; the proposed number of residential lots/units and/or square footage of commercial use; the DPZ website address and "Search Plans In Process" webpage, and information about how to receive meeting minutes and follow-up correspondence if a recipient cannot attend the meeting

FOR SUBDIVISION PLANS

In accordance with Section 16.128 of the Howard County Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, a pre-submission community meeting is required prior to the submission of the subdivision plan to the Department of Planning and Zoning.

A pre-submission meeting will be held on *(date)* at *(time)* at *(meeting location)* for *(Subdivision or project name)* located at *(address, see enclosed site location map)*. The site is zoned *(zoning designation)* and the proposed subdivision includes *(# of lots/units)* residential *[lots/units]* AND/OR includes number of non-residential parcels *(# of parcels)* and/or *(square footage amount)* square feet of *[retail/office/institutional/industrial, etc.]* development. The type of initial plan submission to DPZ is a *(plan type)*

General information regarding pre-submission community meetings can be located on the Department of Planning & Zoning [webpage](#)

Be advised, the proposed subdivision plan must be formally submitted to the Department of Planning and Zoning within one year from the meeting date. Once the plan is submitted the information will be provided on the Department of Planning and Zoning [Search Development Plans and Public Meetings](#) web application

FOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANS

In accordance with Section 16.156 of the Howard County Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, a pre-submission community meeting is required prior to the submission of the site development plan to the Department of Planning and Zoning for new non-residential development and certain existing redevelopment if the site is located within 200 feet of a residential zoning district.

A pre-submission meeting will be held on *(date)* at *(time)* at *(meeting location)* for *(subdivision or project name)* located at *(address)(see enclosed site location map)*. The site is zoned *(zoning designation)* and the proposed site development plan includes *(# of lots/units)* residential *[lots/units]* AND/OR includes number of non-residential parcels *(# of parcels)* and/or *(square footage amount)* square feet of *[retail/office/institutional/industrial, etc.]* development. The type of initial plan submission to DPZ is a *(plan type)*.

General information regarding pre-submission community meetings can be located on the Department of Planning & Zoning [webpage](#)

Be advised, the proposed site development plan must be formally submitted to the Department of Planning and Zoning within one year from the meeting date. Once the plan is submitted the information will be provided on the Department of Planning and Zoning [Search Development Plans and Public Meetings](#) web application

FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PETITION:

In accordance with Section 131.0 of the Howard County Zoning Regulations, a pre-submission community meeting is required prior to the submission of the Conditional Use application to the Department of Planning and Zoning

A pre-submission meeting will be held on *(date)* at *(time)* at *(meeting location)* for *(project name)* located at *(address) (see enclosed site location map)*. The site is currently zoned *(zoning designation)* and is proposed for a Conditional Use for *(Conditional Use category)*. The proposed development of the property includes *(#lots/units)* residential *[lots/units]* and/or includes *[square footage amount]* square feet of retail/office/institutional/industrial, etc] development. The type of initial plan submission to DPZ is a *(plan type)*.

General information regarding pre-submission community meetings can be located on the Department of Planning & Zoning's [webpage](#)

Be advised, the proposed Conditional Use petition must be formally submitted to the Department of Planning and Zoning within one year from the meeting date.

FOR A SITE PLAN REZONING PETITION

In accordance with Subtitle 2 of Title 16 of the Howard County Code, a pre-submission community meeting is required prior to the submission of the Site Plan Rezoning Petition to the Department of Planning and Zoning.

A pre-submission meeting will be held on *(date)* at *(time)* at *(meeting location)* for *(project name)* located at *(address)* (see enclosed site location map). The site is currently zoned *(zoning designation)* and is proposed for rezoning to *(proposed zoning designation)*. The proposed site plan includes *(# of lots/units)* residential [lots/units] AND/OR includes *(# of parcels)* non-residential parcels and/or *(square footage amount)* square feet of [retail/office/institutional/industrial, etc.] development. The type of initial plan submission to DPZ is a *(plan type)*.

General information regarding pre-submission community meetings can be located on the Department of Planning & Zoning [webpage](#)

Be advised, the proposed site plan rezoning petition must be formally submitted to the Department of Planning and Zoning within one year from the meeting date.

FOR A PIECEMEAL REZONING PETITION

In accordance with Subtitle 2 of Title 16 of the Howard County Code, a pre-submission community meeting is required prior to the submission of the Piecemeal Rezoning Petition to the Department of Planning and Zoning.

A pre-submission meeting will be held on *(date)* at *(time)* at *(meeting location)* for *(project name)* located at *(address)* (see enclosed site location map). The site is currently zoned *(zoning designation)* and is proposed for rezoning to *(proposed zoning designation)*. The type of initial plan submission to DPZ is a *(plan type)*.

General information regarding pre-submission community meetings can be located on the Department of Planning & Zoning [webpage](#)

Be advised, the proposed piecemeal rezoning petition must be formally submitted to the Department of Planning and Zoning within one year from the meeting date.